

“I’ll Go”—

Military Police Mobilize Again in Support of Operation Noble Eagle

By Captain Terry Chriszt

Once again, Soldiers of the Ohio Army National Guard’s 437th Military Police Battalion have answered the nation’s call. Nearly 60 Soldiers from the battalion have mobilized to support the Global War on Terrorism. In January 2005, military police from the Headquarters, Headquarters Detachment, and the 135th, 323d, and 324th Military Police Companies joined the battalion’s 838th Military Police Company in conducting law and order operations at both Fort Eustis and Fort Story in Virginia. All the Soldiers were assigned to the 838th Military Police Company upon mobilization.

After arriving at Fort Eustis, the 838th began an extensive two-week train-up period. Soldiers responded to a number of realistic training situations, including medical emergencies, domestic disturbances, fire alarms, traffic accidents, and the processing of

individuals for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Some Soldiers felt that the most challenging cases were those relating to domestic disturbances. One Soldier said that these cases could be a very personal and embarrassing experience for the subjects involved.

“Many times, children are put in the middle and they are unwilling victims in an otherwise preventable crime,” he said. Children have no control over the situation and do not usually understand why their parents are fighting or why the police are involved. Domestic disturbance cases are unpredictable and can become even worse if officers do not respond properly.

Another training situation required Soldiers to respond to a suspicious package at the installation post office. They had to perform security measures and summon explosive ordnance disposal personnel. Ultimately, the suspicious package was destroyed with a controlled explosion.

Before the training was finished, every Soldier had to pass the oleoresin capsicum pepper spray qualification. Military police carry a can of the pepper spray on their utility belts and learn to use it properly. However, this training situation reversed the usual experience. The scenario assumed that an individual had seized a military police Soldier’s spray can and used it against him. The Soldier was sprayed and then had to make his way through an obstacle course, draw his weapon, apprehend a suspect, and call for backup. Only after all those steps were completed correctly could the Soldier remove the pepper spray from his face.

“I feel that this deployment is letting me put my skills to the test,” said one military police Soldier. “It is providing crucial experience in a career field that is very challenging.”

When the training was over, many evaluators and leaders were impressed with how well the Soldiers adapted to their mission. One observer commented that the military police assumed the law and order mission at both Fort Eustis and Fort Story within two weeks and demonstrated a high level of professionalism in the process. The commander of the 765th Transportation Battalion expressed his thanks and admiration for the Soldiers of the 838th Military Police Company, saying that their professionalism and



The vehicle check is one of many tasks for maintaining on-post security.

dedication made it impossible to distinguish the National Guard Soldiers from those who had spent the last 10 years on active duty. He praised them for their service.

“There have been, in the history of our nation, a special group of people that I call ‘I’ll Go’ people. When there is a need, they leave behind their families, and their homes, and the safety of their daily lives and they say ‘I’ll go.’ The 838th are ‘I’ll go’ people and I am truly grateful to you for coming to Fort Eustis to keep us and our families safe,” he added. While mobilized, the 838th Military Police Company (Forward) was assigned to the 765th Transportation Battalion, 8th Transportation Brigade.

Since 11 September 2001, Soldiers of the 437th Military Police Battalion have answered the nation’s call to duty in many ways, performing airport security in Ohio; force protection and law and order operations at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and the Military District of Washington, DC; and combat support operations in Iraq and Kuwait.